

Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Town of Huntington Application for Huntington Station

Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will be received by the Regional Councils. Applicant responses for each section should be as complete and succinct as possible. Applications must be received by the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council by **4:00 PM on June 14, 2017**. Submit your application as a Word Document to LIREDC@esd.ny.gov.

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Huntington

Downtown Name: Huntington Station

County: Suffolk

Vision for Downtown. Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.

To maximize present and future economic opportunities and assets within the downtown hamlet/transportation hub of Huntington Station in anticipation of the MTA's December 2022 rollout of East Side Access and in furtherance of the station's south side development. The redevelopment of the downtown core shall leverage existing government and master developer planning studies, together with community-supported development ideas, to spur and/or enhance commercial, retail, residential, office, hospitality, parks, open space, cultural and civic uses that will serve the needs of the catchment area and Town residents alike. The goal is to return a sense of place to the hamlet that was lost to urban renewal by introducing new uses that will increase neighborhood cohesion, public safety, walkability and enjoyment of the hamlet while minimizing auto use and traffic impacts resulting from increased transit ridership.

Justification. Provide an overview of the downtown, highlighting the area's defining characteristics and the reasons for its selection. Explain why the downtown is ready for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) investment, and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.

Huntington Station, located in the Town of Huntington and the County of Suffolk, is similar to most downtown areas struggling to rebound from many years of disinvestment.

Huntington Station's emergence as a population and commercial center began 150 years ago and can be directly attributed to the expansion of the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), which established a depot in 1867 on the site of the present station. The railroad attracted commerce and people to the hamlet, where three hotels, a bank, a post office, a racetrack, and two to three story buildings on both sides of New York Avenue were built to cater to both the needs of travelers and to the eastern migrating population. These buildings provided space for offices, apartments, convenience retail and service establishments. Goods and services offered included coal, lumber and feed merchants, a bicycle shop, a barber, a shoe repair store, meat and poultry purveyors, a drug store, a general and sundry store, a bakery, a grocery store, an auto repair garage,

and a clothing store. Huntington Station had become an important commercial center of western Suffolk County.

By the end of 1960, Huntington Station's economic growth had placed it at the top of the ten Suffolk County communities having the greatest number of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. In 1961, Huntington Station, with over 6.6 percent of Suffolk County's 8,100 businesses, maintained that top ten ranking. According to a report compiling rankings by Dun and Bradstreet, the 532 Huntington Station businesses exceeded those in Babylon, Bay Shore, Lindenhurst, Huntington, Patchogue, Amityville, Riverhead, East Northport and Copiague.

All of that growth came to a halt during the 1960s. Under urban renewal, the 86 businesses surrounding the railroad station that comprised the economic center and vital core of Huntington Station were demolished. Conceptually, the displaced and relocated businesses were to be replaced by a modern shopping center with adequate off-street parking. Additional office space was to be provided, while industrial uses eliminated. Housing was also impacted, with the urban renewal plan calling for the displacement of over 100 households, and the construction of new single family housing and garden apartments capable of accommodating 275 families.

Unfortunately the urban renewal plan failed to deliver on its vision. Rather than centralizing the commercial activity in a new neighborhood business district, the process of urban renewal altogether eliminated the economic center of Huntington Station, replacing it with commuter parking lots that remain today. The widening of New York Avenue for the four traffic lanes built under the railroad overpass separated the communities on the east and west sides of New York Avenue. The failure to install the envisioned landscaped dividing mall on New York Avenue made crossing it unsafe and pedestrian unfriendly, and geographically divided the neighborhood further eroding Huntington Station's sense of community. These features continue to have the same effect today.

While in recent decades the Town of Huntington has enacted policy, adopted plans, invested in the area's infrastructure and partnered with a private master developer, the process to overcome over fifty years of disinvestment and blight has been long and arduous. The award of New York State's DRI grant would become the tipping point to position Huntington Station on a fast track to coincide with the 2022 debut of the LIRR's East Side Access service from Huntington Train Station, and expected precipitous increase in ridership.

In identifying a defining characteristic or economic driver for Huntington Station's downtown, The Town of Huntington need not look further than the very public asset that ignited the area's explosive growth over 100 years ago: Huntington Train Station. This transit hub, situated in the downtown's central business district, serves 5,000 commuters daily with a slightly less than one hour connection to Penn Station. Huntington Train Station is the beginning point of electrification for the Port Jefferson Branch of the LIRR, so many of the Town's residents and others, begin and end their work days here. Focusing growth around transit stations is a way to capitalize on expensive public transit investments, such as East Side Access, for the benefit of the larger community. Residents living near transit are more likely to use it to commute to work than are other residents in the region, reducing traffic congestion. Pedestrian-friendly communities encourage residents and commuters alike to walk to nearby shopping and commercial activities, providing local merchants with a built in market for their merchandise.

In 2013 the Town partnered with private master developer (Renaissance Downtowns) that has engaged the stakeholder community to rally widespread support and ideas for the commercial redevelopment of Huntington

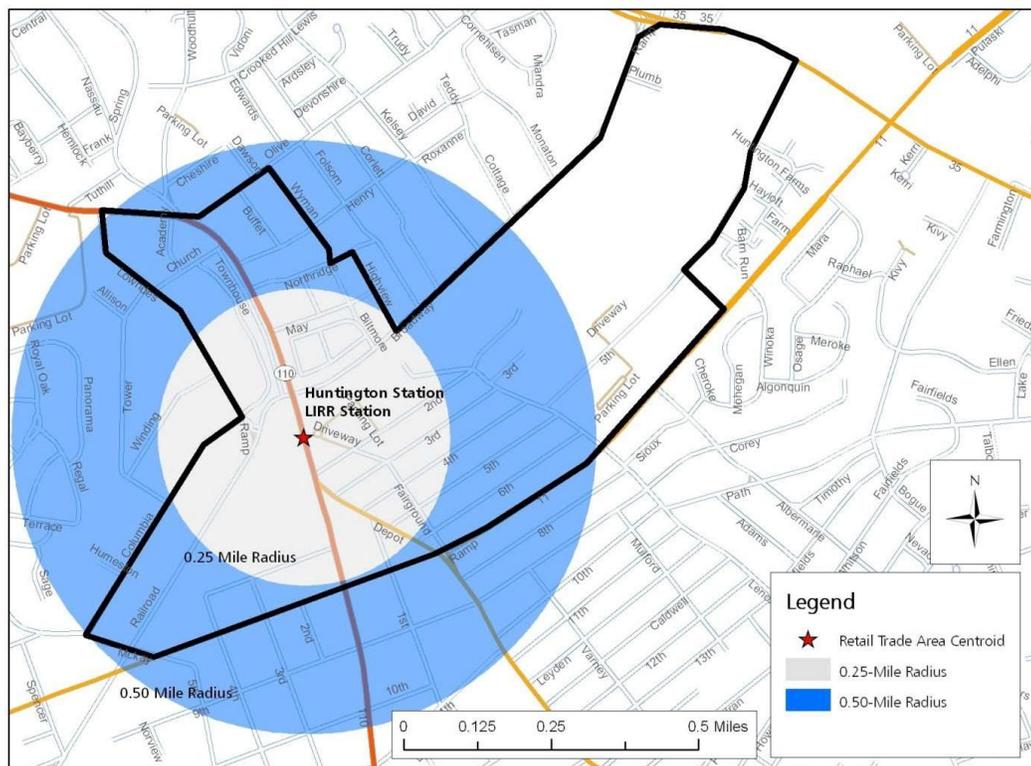
Station on New York Avenue, both north, and south of Huntington Train Station. This process has not only set in place a ready and waiting human infrastructure from which to assemble a Local Planning Committee, but one that can hit the ground running to develop a strategic investment plan to further development of the station's south side.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1) Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood. Detail the boundaries of the targeted neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the neighborhood should be concentrated and well-defined. Core neighborhoods beyond a traditional downtown or central business district are eligible, if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment. Attach a map that clearly delineates the downtown neighborhood.

The compact neighborhood for the DRI initiative encompasses a half mile radius emanating from Huntington Train station at the center, with an emphasis on the southern portion of the New York Avenue corridor as redevelopment is currently underway and/or in advanced stages of planning in the northern portion. The southern portion (south of the LIRR tracks) is currently non-sewered. Without increased wastewater treatment efficiencies or capacity, a complete revitalization of Huntington Station will not be possible.

The boundary area includes substantial portions of the Huntington Station Business Improvement District, original Urban Renewal Area and a recently Department of State-designated NYS Brownfields Opportunity Area or BOA (outlined on the map in black) - areas that endured the harshest economic blows following urban renewal's razing of the Huntington Station's central business district, two recessions and dated "anti-railroad development" mindsets.



- 2) Catchment area.** Outline why the downtown, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing or increasing population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown destination.

According to an economic demand analysis from ERA AECOM, area households within the Brownfields Opportunity Area (area outlined in black in map on the previous page) have a total retail expenditure potential of approximately \$50 million, with roughly \$10 million of that expenditure potential within a ½ mile of Huntington Train Station. Since this demand analysis was completed in 2010, we can only assume that as the economy has improved, these numbers have increased.

ERA/AECOM considers a walk-able retail trade area consisting of households residing within a ½ mile radius of the LIRR station. In general, a ½ mile walk takes about ten minutes and is considered an acceptable distance to travel by foot for convenience shopping. There are 524 households and 1,647 people living within a ¼ mile of Huntington Train Station. Within a ½ mile of the LIRR station, there are 1,726 households and 6,147 people.

Commuters using the LIRR station are another significant source of retail demand. According to LIRR records, approximately 5,000 westbound commuters use the Huntington Train Station during peak weekday hours. These commuters are a captive audience for convenience retail in the business district. Data indicates that Huntington commuters have an average annual expenditure potential of about \$5,300 each. Accordingly, it is estimated that the current Huntington commuter market generates annual retail spending potential of \$23.8 million. The total retail spending potential between area residents and commuters totals \$73.9 million annually.

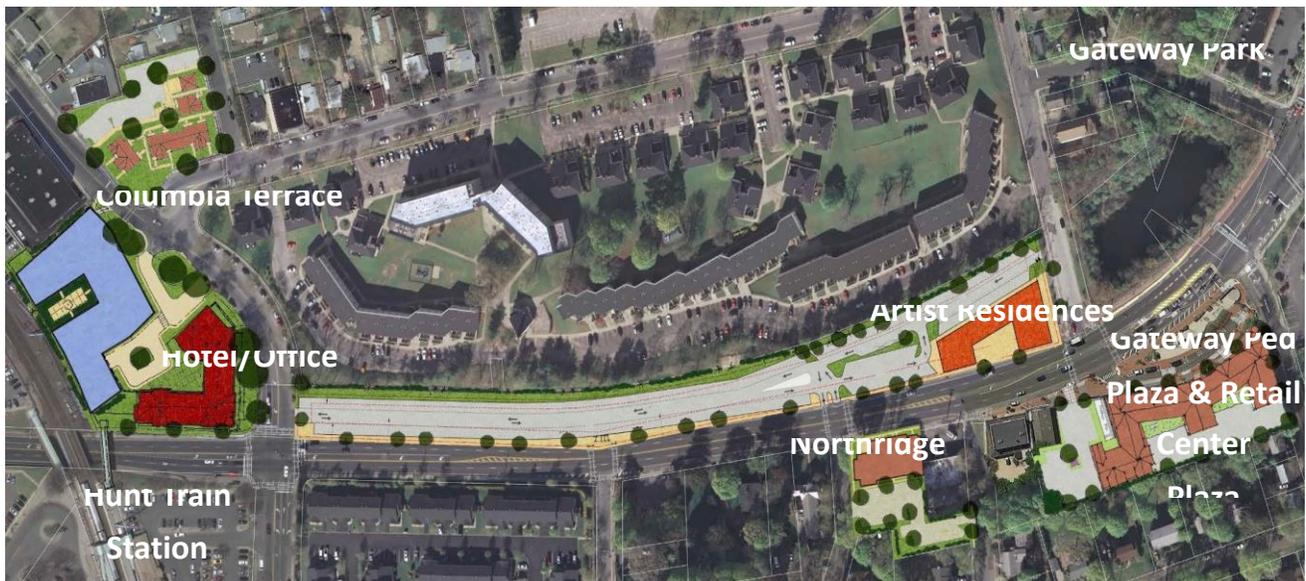
Based on the above data, we know the catchment area can support a vibrant, year-round downtown. Furthermore, Huntington Station possesses the highest population (33,029) of any hamlet in the Town (total Huntington population is 203,264). And last but not least, the New York Avenue state system corridor is among the most heavily travelled thoroughfares in the Town of Huntington with a major regional shopping mall, The Shops at Walt Whitman, 2 miles to the south of the Huntington Station train station, and the wildly popular Huntington Village, two miles to the north. There is yet untold millions to be tallied in spending potential in the thousands that traverse the New York Avenue corridor north and south seven days a week and all hours of the day.

- 3) Past Investment, future investment potential.** Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior or catalyze future private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.

Since 2004, Huntington Station projects have derived approximately \$23 million in public investment from both Town funds and various grants received from all levels of government. The public funds enabled the start of critical capital infrastructure improvements, such as the construction of a pedestrian plaza at Olive Street & New York Avenue, acquisition of and development of Huntington Station's downtown Gateway Park at Lowndes and New York Avenue, Huntington Train Station main entrance improvements and a comprehensive decorative streetscaping campaign along the east and west sides of New York Avenue, spanning from Nassau to Pulaski Roads, that set the stage for private investment to follow.

In 2013 Huntington Station saw the **\$120 million Avalon Bay at Huntington Station** construction completed with 303 rental units (44 of which are affordable). **Beechwood Homes** is currently nearing completion of its **\$38 million** construction project of 76 equity townhomes known as **Country Pointe at Huntington Station** (11 of which are affordable).

In 2012 **Renaissance Downtowns** became Huntington Station’s Master Developer. Renaissance has, to date, invested \$4+ million dollars toward extensive community outreach and planning of development of projects north of the train tracks along New York Avenue (shown below) where sewer infrastructure is presently available. The Northridge mixed-use building is presently under construction (3 story building, 6,500 SF of retail and 16 one-bedroom apartments) and the Gateway Retail Plaza is to follow (3-story building, 16,00 SF of commercial space, 33 studios and 33 one-bedroom apartments). The hotel/office and artist residence projects are in advanced stages of planning. Just yesterday State Senator Carl Marcellino introduced to the Senate bill # S.6634 authorizing the transfer of state-owned land to the town to make way for the development of the hotel/office and artist residences/workspace. Assembly bill # 8413 for same is pending.



Also shown above is the Town of Huntington/Huntington Community Development Agency’s 14-unit military veteran **Columbia Terrace** affordable housing condominium project that is presently out to bid for construction. Columbia Terrace is funded by a combination of grants. Huntington Train Station, Gateway Park and Gateway Pedestrian Plaza flank the northern area of development and are important downtown public assets.

In its strategic plan, the LIREDC added Huntington Station to its Opportunity Agenda based on its needs and the economic potential yet to be tapped within the hamlet. REDC investments to capitalize on in the area to date include a \$1.5 million ESD grant for the redevelopment of the nearby James D. Conte Community Center (a former NYS Armory); \$370,000 through the CFA for restoration of an historic farmhouse within Gateway Park known as the “Teich House”; Two Restore NY grants (\$1.560 million for the Columbia Terrace Affordable Housing Condominium and \$1.170 for the Gateway Plaza (mixed-use) Retail Center). The Huntington Opportunity Resource Center, a mixed-use building located immediately south of the train

station, has twice been the recipient of a total of \$300k in New York Main Street grant funds, and was also the 2015 beneficiary of CFA funding under the NY Unemployed Worker Training Program, with St. Joseph's College as the applicant and job training provider for the Center. Additionally, the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area program awarded Huntington Station a total of \$340,000 for planning and community outreach. The hamlet was formally designated a "BOA" by the Department of State in August 2016.

The Town of Huntington has, since 2004, invested approximately \$15 million in Huntington Station. These funds have been expended on sidewalk and curb improvements (New York Avenue & Depot Road), street trees, decorative street lights, Huntington Station Gateway Pedestrian Plaza construction, acquisition of parkland including an historic farmhouse that has been renovated as a tourism/parks destination in the downtown, development of Huntington Station Gateway Park, an urban community garden, acquisition of land for affordable housing, construction funds for Columbia Terrace Affordable Veteran's Condominium (that is currently out to bid for construction), and the James D. Conte Community Center. Additionally, in 2003 the Town of Huntington facilitated the formation of a **Huntington Station Business Improvement District** that generates approximately \$100,000 annually for improvements and promotion of the downtown business district. In that same year, the Town of Huntington formed the not for profit **Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation (EDC)** that provides professional/technical support, grant writing and advisory services for the Town of Huntington from its high-level Board of Directors, especially in connection with Huntington Station's revitalization.

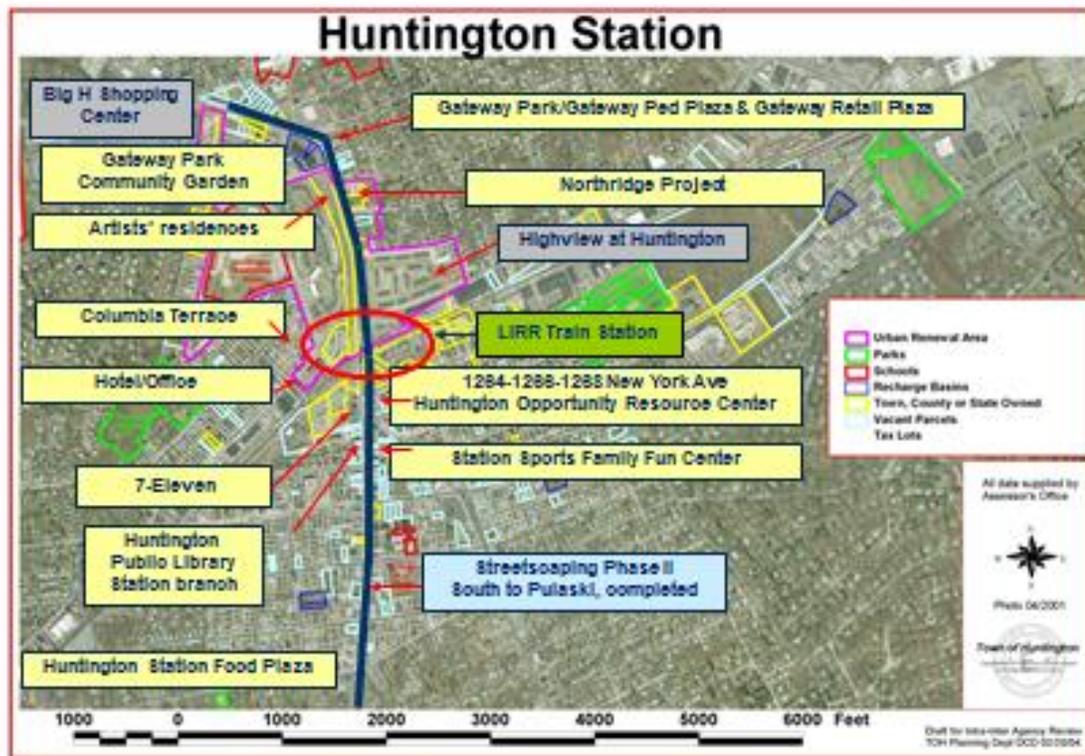
In recognition of the need for sewers south of the train station, in early 2017 Suffolk County officials announced that \$1.25 million had been approved to complete a comprehensive engineering and design plan for sewers south of Huntington Train Station. At that time Huntington Station was designated by the Legislature as a "strategic location" for infrastructure improvements to trigger economic growth in the County. The \$1.25 million public investment in the sewer feasibility study will serve as the roadmap for the construction of sewers south of the train tracks. The County has accounted for an additional \$20 million in its 2017 budget for use in 2018 toward the construction of Huntington Station sewers, however early estimates for the construction of sewers on the south side range between \$30-40 million so additional funding will be needed to build the needed sewers. Also, a total of \$300,000 has been awarded to Huntington Station for downtown capital improvement projects over the years through the Suffolk County Downtown Revitalization Grant program.

Suffolk County's \$1.25 million investment in the sewer study with additional funds planned for sewer construction, in combination with \$10.178 billion investment in East Side Access (\$7.5 billion by the State, and \$2.7 billion from the federal government), will squarely position Huntington Station as a downtown ripe for development with 2018 shovel ready status. Just as it had 150 years ago, Huntington Train Station will once again become a catalyst for explosive economic growth and improvements in and around the catchment area.

Through former Congressman Steve Israel, nearly \$1 million was awarded to Huntington Station for NY Avenue for use in transportation improvements, LEED certification of the Huntington Opportunity Resource Center building just south of the train station and for the planning of Huntington Station's Gateway Pedestrian Plaza.

In summary, the Town of Huntington, together with its master developer, intergovernmental partners, stakeholders, including civic, business, cultural, human service/not-for-profit and faith-based communities, has a unique and historic opportunity to align and leverage the sum impact of the past investments and community support noted above- and of particular importance, the forthcoming East Side Access transit and sewer study investments, to catalyze private investment south of the train station on both private properties and public property. Owners of land and buildings to the south of the station, such as Michael Lifland, who has submitted a letter of support for this application, have been watching and waiting for Huntington Station’s revitalization to extend south, and bring with it, the sewer infrastructure needed to realize the highest and best uses of their properties to lift up the entire area.

Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation



Aerial of redevelopment area showing proximity of private investment developments to public downtown assets, such as Columbia Terrace, Highview at Huntington (a Town of Huntington initiated multi-family affordable housing project), Gateway Park, Gateway Pedestrian Plaza, LIRR Train Station and Huntington Public Library, Station Branch.

4) Recent or impending job growth. Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.

Developments on the north side of Huntington Train Station have already, and will continue to, promote jobs and job growth within the downtown that will attract professionals to an active life there.

The Town of Huntington and Renaissance Downtowns have entered into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that provides opportunities for construction jobs, contracting opportunities and permanent jobs, such as retail and hospitality, for all projects undertaken by the master developer.

The CBA calls for a 25% local hiring requirement that is currently being exceeded at approximately 30% via ongoing construction of the Northridge development. The immediate job growth at the Northridge development includes 21.7 full time construction jobs, 12.6 indirect full time jobs, and 13.5 induced full time jobs. The Northridge development long term job growth projects \$2 million annually back into the community by 2020, with 19.5 full time permanent jobs by 2020.

The Gateway Plaza development anticipates 52 full time construction jobs, 27.6 indirect full time jobs and 32 induced full time jobs. Its long term job growth projects \$6.5 million annually back into the community by 2020, with 43 full time permanent jobs by 2020 producing \$1.3 million in income.

The two developments above alone will create 49 one bedroom and 33 studio apartments that will be within a few minutes walking distance to Huntington Train Station. The target audience, based on pricing, for these apartments is young and other professionals. These professionals will in turn become a market driver for needed restaurants, food shops and convenience retail within the transit redevelopment area.

In terms of employment centers in close proximity to the target development area, there are numerous but several of particular mention. The Melville corridor, that employs 42,710 of the Town's 114,915 workers, is home to CANON USA and many other large corporations and banking firms. The Melville Marriott is Long Island's second largest hotel. Long Island's two largest accounting firms are located in Melville: Marcum, the largest with 200 LI employees and KPMG the second largest with 148. Also nearby is The Shops at Walt Whitman, a regional shopping mall, and two miles north, downtown Huntington Village with a vibrant restaurant and retail community. Nearby Huntington Hospital employs 2,194. The many thousands working within any of these proximate employment centers, among others throughout the Town, will welcome brand new, affordable and market rate rental housing, retail, cultural, hospitality and entertainment opportunities in the target development area that will be easily accessible by foot, car or by any of the three public transit systems available at the Huntington Station transit hub (the LIRR, Suffolk County bus line and the Huntington Rapid Area Transit bus system)- all of which provide connections to these and other Long Island employment centers.

As development on the north side of Huntington Train Station continues with the anticipated hotel, office and additional retail and rental housing, there will be job growth and opportunities within the immediate catchment area.

Finally, the Town and its Community Development Agency operate job training center just south of the train station in partnership with Suffolk County known as the Huntington Opportunity Resource Center (HORC). HORC both provides free job training opportunities, as well as connects residents with available jobs and needed services five days a week. The Resource Center is staffed by Huntington CDA personnel that respond to needs assessments provided by group of local and active stakeholders known as the Huntington Leadership Council. The leadership council meets monthly at the Center to provide these stakeholder advisory services.

- 5) Attractiveness of physical environment.** Identify the properties or characteristics that the downtown possesses that contribute, or could contribute if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown for a diverse population of varying ages, income, gender identity, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, varied housing types at different levels of affordability, walkability and bikeability, healthy and affordable food markets, and public parks and gathering spaces.

As described earlier, since 2004 the Town and other levels of government have invested approximately \$23 million in the downtown's infrastructure to attract private investment, beautify and make the area pedestrian friendly. Examples: streetscaping, brick sidewalks, new curbs, decorative streetlights, murals, pedestrian plaza with a public art installation and seating areas, Gateway Park & Community Garden, The Teich House (historic farmhouse restoration within Gateway Park), rainwater harvesting garden, hanging flower baskets and holiday decorations. Station Sports offers family recreation while Huntington Station Food Plaza, healthy food. Renaissance mixed-use projects will provide new retail with attainable housing above, artists' lofts, hotel, office and other developments important in any downtown to attract both young and older populations.

In response to that public investment, in 2012 Station Sports (a \$1.6 million project) opened after transforming a dilapidated vacant property into a recreational oasis for individuals and families. In 2009, a new 7-Eleven (a \$1.5 million project) replaced an abandoned Jiffy Lube site. The Huntington Station C-6 Overlay District, enacted in 2004, directed the 7-Eleven store to be constructed up to the sidewalk line in keeping with Huntington's desire to create a "downtown feel" with all new development on the New York Avenue corridor.



Shown above: Station Sports Family Fun Center, 16 Depot Road (corner of Depot & New York Avenue) and the new 7-Eleven, 1297 New York Avenue and the Huntington Public Library, Station Branch, 1335 New York Avenue, all within one block of Huntington Train Station.

Huntington Station Food Plaza, located in the southern portion of the downtown NY Ave corridor, opened in 2011. It provides the catchment area with fresh produce, seafood and other grocery items at competitive prices. Its owners transformed an abandoned warehouse into a well-patronized and appreciated community asset. Huntington Station Food Plaza has since become an important commercial anchor in the downtown that will complement and serve +retail and housing opportunities yet to come on the south side's redevelopment.



Huntington Station’s Gateway Pedestrian Plaza was constructed in 2013 at the intersection of New York Avenue & Olive Street to replace and beautify a blighted NYS ROW property. The plaza features a public art installation of limestone sculptural benches and other seating areas and serves as a year-round gathering place and outdoor stage for concerts (shown above) and other seasonal events. Renaissance’s Gateway Plaza (below, left) will be constructed later this year just behind the plaza. This development will provide the north side downtown area with new retail space, structured/elevated parking and 66 units of studio and one bedroom rental units within several blocks walking/biking distance from the train station. The Northridge development (below, right) is now under construction with ground floor retail and 16 one-bedroom apartments above. These projects have raised the bar for architectural design to follow in the downtown.



2017 DRI Application





In 2010, the Town, after a series of acquisitions, created Huntington Station’s Gateway Park. In doing so, it reclaimed approximately two-acres of derelict vacant land that had become a troublesome spot for the surrounding community. Under an agreement with the Town, and also with financial support for construction materials from the Town, Gateway Community Garden Inc. was formed shortly thereafter to help the Town transform the land into an oasis of 87 raised beds, 24 of them for children and 6 for adults with disabilities.

A program of cooking demonstrations and gardening education helps the gardeners become more skillful and adept at using their vegetables for healthy meals.

An arts grant enlisted 60 local adults and children, shown above, in painting colorful and educational murals to decorate the extra-tall raised beds for the disabled. The free standing mural panels show a planting calendar on the side facing the garden, while on the other side, which faces the street, the panels display a gorgeous array of flowers and vegetables that will beautify the space year-round.

Plans call for construction of more garden beds to accommodate a long waiting list of gardeners. A social gathering area and children’s natural play area will also be added.

Gateway Garden has drawn enthusiastic praise from residents and officials, and has given the gardeners a place to meet their neighbors, grow delicious organic vegetables, and enjoy nature and the outdoors—all in an urbanized, suburban neighborhood in Huntington Station.



At left, Gateway Park is shown from a NY Avenue streetview after the new sidewalks, retaining and decorative fencing were installed.



The Teich farmhouse (before & after pictures above) was once part of a thriving Huntington Station dairy enterprise known as Hillside Dairy. As part the development of Gateway Park, the Town restored the farmhouse with a combination of local, federal and NYS CFA grant funds. In doing so, it has facilitated an adaptive-reuse of the structure to house public amenities and interpretive programming relevant to the early agricultural use and general history of Huntington Station. The Teich house will provide exhibit and meeting space, as well as a handicapped-accessible restroom for Gateway gardeners and other park-goers. Its newly-renovated kitchen will become a stage for cooking demonstrations using freshly-harvested produce from the garden to promote healthy eating and recipe ideas.

6) Quality of Life policies. Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, comprehensive plans, complete streets plans, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

The Town's Horizons 2020 Master Plan encourages a mix of national, regional and local tenants as well as cultural and entertainment uses, specialty shopping, artists' lofts and other live-work spaces that can act as anchors in downtown hamlet centers, especially older hamlets such as Huntington Station. In 2004 the Town Board enacted the Huntington Station Business Overlay District to promote such uses for its downtown redevelopment. To date the overlay district has helped spur many of these uses, even in the face of the economic downturn post 2007. It has also served to discourage incompatible uses in the downtown. Transit-oriented and Huntington Station revitalization projects are also highly encouraged and are fast-tracked through Community Development. At its May 2017 meeting, the Huntington Town Board approved a

measure, sponsored by Councilwoman Tracey A. Edwards, to require one-fifth of the apartments constructed in commercial district mixed-use buildings be designated as affordable. This initiative addresses specific comments that apartments constructed over retail in Huntington Village are renting at rates beyond what young people entering the workforce can afford.

The affordable housing resolution also implements several requirements for affordable housing in residential districts, including the number of units that must be set aside as affordable in return for increased density and the quality of the affordable units in relation to the market rate ones. The resolution also requires those benefitting from affordable housing to file a statement certifying that the unit is still their main residency.

- 7) Support for the local vision.** Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to support the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Describe the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

Renaissance has built a 2,000+ member stakeholder community known as Source the Station (sourcethestation.com), with members meeting both online and at monthly meetings to “crowdsource” development ideas. The community outreach initiative brought forward ideas that are contained in the Development Strategy that were unanimously approved by the Huntington Town Board in June 2013. Throughout its outreach process Renaissance funds feasibility studies for development ideas that gain traction. These studies objectively and rationally identify the strengths and weaknesses of an existing business or proposed venture, opportunities and threats present in the environment, the resources required to carry it through, and ultimately, its prospects for success.

In addition, the Huntington Opportunity Resource Center features a Leadership Council comprised of stakeholders that meet monthly to discuss, advise and support initiatives that support the ongoing revitalization and residents of Huntington Station. The Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation, as well as the Town’s Local Development Corporation, also act as high level stakeholders that provide funding for job-training programs and for the purchase of needed equipment at the Resource Center. Huntington Station is also fortunate to possess an active faith-based community of clergy leaders that interact with the Town as well as with not-for-profit leadership such as Family Service League, TRI-Community & Youth Agency, Harry Chapin Food Bank, “La Casita”, Huntington Public Library, Station Branch and Huntington Opportunity Resource Center to ensure inclusiveness and cohesiveness of all stakeholders.

Over the years these stakeholders have successfully lobbied the Town for zoning changes, variances, approvals and many other actions that have been beneficial to the downtown. Their work assures socially, environmentally and economically responsible redevelopment ideas of the downtown. The Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation or Huntington Opportunity Resource Center, or both, could facilitate a local DRI Planning Committee.

8) Readiness: Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above, including a range of transformative projects that will be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project) and which may leverage DRI funding with private investment or other funds. Such projects could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. While such projects should have demonstrated public support, it is recognized that projects will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State. Explain how the majority of projects proposed for DRI funding demonstrate their readiness for implementation.

Suffolk County's \$1.25 million investment in the Huntington Station sewer study with additional funds planned for sewer construction, in combination with \$10.178 billion investment in East Side Access (\$7.5 billion by the State, and \$2.7 billion from the federal government), will squarely position Huntington Station as a downtown ripe for development with 2018 shovel ready status. Renaissance's Source the Station community outreach program has generated many proposals for development projects not only on the north side of the station where ground has been broken, but also on the south side in anticipation of sewer infrastructure. Huntington Station is poised to become the next cool downtown on Long Island.

Recent implementation of public capital improvements through Town and government grants has triggered substantial private investment as detailed in this application but adequate public resources and continuing cooperation are needed to fulfill the larger goals for downtown's redevelopment. The downtown abuts a state road system/ROW, so the state is a critical partner needed to advance this plan and vision. With the Town's commitment, much has been accomplished, but the momentum that has been achieved to date needs a "shot in the arm" to not only meet but overcome the challenges that lie ahead in fulfilling the revitalization's immense economic potential south of the train station.

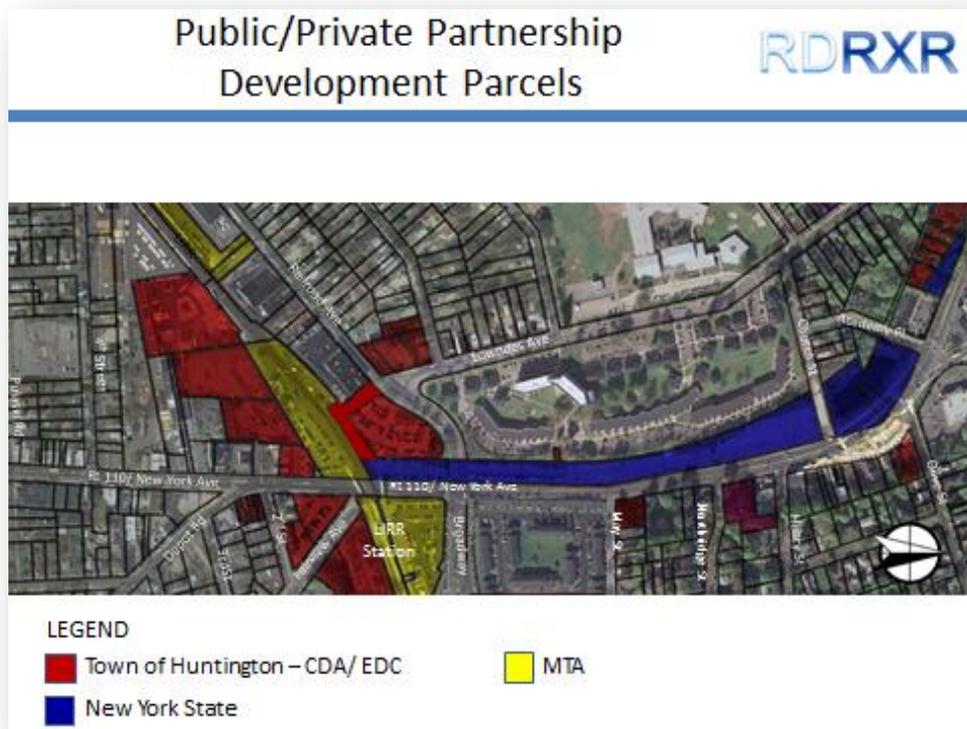
The Town of Huntington is seeking to maximize the planning resources and capital project funding available through the DRI initiative to build upon the progress achieved to date, and most especially, to leverage its partnership with Suffolk County in moving forward with a solid plan to address the un-sewered portion of New York Avenue south of the train station, the lack of which has altogether stymied continuing redevelopment efforts in this area.

To demonstrate from a visual perspective, the largest mass of Town parcels shown below in red to the south (left) of Huntington Train Station cannot be developed without sewer infrastructure.

Renaissance Downtowns, through its Source the Station crowdsourcing initiative, has alternative proposals for dynamic land use on these public parcels that include a mixed use transit-oriented Town Center including residential, entertainment, recreation and retail.

Further, until such time as sewers are constructed, there can be no expansion of existing single-story commercial buildings on New York Avenue in the un-sewered section to make way for smart growth-inspired mixed-uses, including and especially restaurants or other “wet” uses such as microbreweries that are conspicuously absent, and needed in the southern end of the downtown.

Just as it had 150 years ago, with East Side Access only a few years away, Huntington Train Station is once again emerging as a present day catalyst for explosive economic growth and improvements in and around the catchment area. Huntington is looking to repeat history.



9) Administrative Capacity. Describe the extent of the existing local administrative capacity to manage this initiative, including potential oversight of concurrent contracts.

The administrative capacity to manage this initiative is extensive and includes officials in the Town Supervisor's Office, The Huntington Community Development Agency, Department of Planning & Environment, Town Attorney's Office, Department of Engineering, The Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation, as well The Huntington Opportunity Resource Center, that have been working collaboratively to administer and manage the ongoing redevelopment effort since Renaissance Downtowns was designated in 2012 as Master Developer. Town representatives from each of the departments listed above comprise a working group that meets bi-weekly with the master developer to monitor and to allocate Town resources as needed to keep projects moving forward. Town staff also meets internally in between working group meetings to communicate, coordinate and collaborate on myriad projects in need of action and management.

10) Other. Provide any other information that informed the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.

We thank you for your time and consideration.

*Don't forget to attach a map that clearly delineates the downtown neighborhood. (See item 1.)